


**Complex Texts, Complex Tasks, Complex Times:
Differentiating Reading Instruction in the Time of Common Core
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Continuum of Task Complexity during Guided Reading



Level 1: Word level: Decoding	Level 2: Word level: Vocabulary	Level 3: Sentence Level Comprehension	Level 4: Cumulative Comprehension	Level 5: Critical Consideration	Level 6: Discerning Greater Meaning
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Level 1—Word Level, Decoding: When a student has trouble reading a word, the teacher prompts the student to utilize a strategy (such as chunking the word) to help her decode it.

Level 2—Word Level, Vocabulary: Teacher asks the student to use a vocabulary strategy in order to define an unknown word.

Level 3—Sentence Level Comprehension: Teacher asks the student a factual comprehension question which can easily be answered by referring back to the text.

Level 4—Cumulative Comprehension: Teacher hopes to ascertain whether the student has made meaning across the text by asking him to provide an overview of the text. *“Walk me through what you just read to help me understand it better.”*

Level 5—Critical Consideration: Teacher demands more from the student than just demonstrating understanding. Teacher expects student to critically engage with the text, to analyze or critique. *“Why do you think the author included information about (XYZ) in this article?”* or *“Do you think the author is correct in his assertion?”*

Level 6—Discerning Greater Meaning: Teacher asks the student to consider how the reading fits in with his larger understanding of the world around him. *“How does this article shape your thinking about (XYZ)?”* or *“How does this article fit in with what we learned about (XYZ) during science?”*